



# Lowell

Sharing America's Special Places



# Special People and Places

In 2016, Americans will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service. Looking towards the centennial, the NPS released “A Call to Action” in 2011, a plan describing specific goals and actions that “chart a new direction for the agency as it enters its second century” ([www.nps.gov/calltoaction](http://www.nps.gov/calltoaction)). Lowell National Historical Park is charting a new direction as well. While we continue to preserve historic structures like the Boott Mills and Pawtucket Dam, we are seeking new ways for people to find personal meaning and connections to these and other park resources and stories. To this effort, the park joined forces with the Lowell Heritage Partnership (LHP) to refresh connections

between the public, especially Lowellians, and the park. Through a grant from the Theodore Edson Parker Foundation, the park and LHP embarked on a journey to further our understanding of the interests, needs, and dreams of local people; to strengthen the knowledge and skills of park staff and community leaders in the area of participatory community programs; and to test pilot programs that could be prototypes for new, ongoing activities in the park. We are only just beginning to see the fruits of our labor, but one thing is clear: it takes special people to preserve special places.

**Celeste Bernardo**, *Superintendent*

## Artist in Residence

Vassilios “Bill” Giavis is a native Lowellian and completed the park’s first artist in residence program in December. Bill has been painting for over 25 years, embracing his native city. Bill uses Lowell to inspire his work. Much of what he represents through his art connects to Lowell’s rich history as an industrial city and the stories, sites, and places preserved by Lowell National Historical Park.

# Preserving America’s Special Places in Lowell

Always on a quest to introduce the public to the historic landscape that Lowell preserves, the projects and contacts evolve.

## Trolleys Roll

Visitors’ experiences have long been enhanced by the park’s trolley operating in the downtown historic district. 2014 marks the 30th anniversary of trolleys returning to Lowell. Improvements to the park’s trolley operations and the feasibility of expanding the trolley system into a public transit network have been complemented for the year with the focused effort of the National Park Foundation’s Transportation Scholar in Lowell, Christopher Hayes.

## Sharing Lowell

Park staff are frequently requested as speakers or hosts to those interested in discovering how Lowell has brought preservation, partnerships, culture, and economics together. Sharing opportunities occurred in several forums including:

- Federal Transit Administration Streetcar Workshop
- Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors Conference

## Lowell Mill Redevelopment Status

**5.1 Million Sq. Feet** of Mill Area  
Mill Space Completed/Current Projects = **94%**  
Investment to Date = **\$650 Million**

- Representatives from the Pullman Historic District in Chicago
- Smithsonian Executive Committee on the Immigration and Migration Initiative
- Massachusetts Cultural Council

## Windows, LOTS of Mill Windows!

A significant mill feature, once past the impressive massing of bricks, is windows. At Boott Mills #6, home of the park’s museum, replacement windows are a project that saw progress in 2013 with the completion of a replacement window design and installation of a portion of the total 486 windows.

## Tracking Redevelopment

“Scorecard” and “mill preservation” are terms not frequently paired. In Lowell, the last 30 years progress of mill rehabilitation to adaptive uses requires a scorecard. A key component of the feasibility of recent and pending projects is the NPS-administered Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program for projects meeting the Secretary of Interior’s preservation standards. The opportunities to experience and interpret

Lowell’s historic landscape are greatly enhanced with the mill complexes in place. Boott West and Lawrence Mills #2 and #33 were recently completed. Projects at Counting House Lofts at Hamilton Mills and Kitson Mill are underway. The Picker Building at Massachusetts Mill is scheduled to commence in July.

## Pawtucket Dam

The park continues to pursue the preservation of the historic Pawtucket Dam. On November 15, 2013, the U.S. Department of Justice filed an appeal in Boston of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission’s Order to replace the wooden flashboards on the dam with an inflatable crest gate system. The appeal is pending.

## Collection Preservation

A piece of literary history garnered attention. The backpack owned by Jack Kerouac, part of a display in the Mill Girls and Immigrants Exhibit was cleaned, conserved, and a condition assessment report was completed by NPS conservator Margaret Breuker.



**Opposite page:** Paul Marion, Bill Giavis, and Celeste Bernardo cheer Bill’s Artist in Residence show at Boott Mills.

**Right:** The Merrimack River glows as it flows over the Pawtucket Dam.





# Connecting People to Parks

## Engaging with Lowell's Communities *You may have “Met us On the Merrimack...”*

With thanks to a grant from the Theodore Edson Parker Foundation and partnership with the Lowell Heritage Partnership, Park Rangers connected with hundreds of local residents along the Merrimack River on the Vandenberg Esplanade and Bellegarde Boathouse. They shared the Park’s history, program, and activities while offering short boat rides to audiences new to Lowell’s national park.



## *Or learned to dance or participated in a Lowell Folklife Series Program...*

Audiences engaged in cultural experiences ranging from Chinese noodle pulling to model ship making to the musical and dance talents of bachata, merengue, and mariachi. As a partnership with the Massachusetts Cultural Council, we thank our State Folklorist Maggie Holtzberg for bringing these intriguing programs to Lowell.

*You may be among the many students* who have supported the park as members of the Spindle City Corps in partnership with Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI) or discovered opportunities with the NPS through SCIP – the Student Career Intake Program.



## *Were you there when the lights dimmed?*

Partners brought two film series to the park on Tuesday nights: The Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust and the Lowell Film Collaborative explored environmental themes; Angkor Dance Troupe’s “Evolution of Cambodian Dance” series offered insights to ties from classical to modern dance, while also connecting with the Cambodian American youth experience.

## *Or, perhaps you attended the 27th Lowell Folk Festival or Lowell Summer Music Series concerts?*

The Folk Festival producing partnership brings together the park with: the City of Lowell, Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, Greater Merrimack Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, Lowell Festival Foundation, and National Council for the Traditional Arts. The 24th Lowell Summer Music Series hosted popular music performances and “Free Fun for Kids” events from June through early September with a huge thanks to the premier Series sponsor, Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union.

## *Or, joined in the youth activities throughout the year?*

Many communities discovered Art in the Park during the Free Fun for Kids programs of the Lowell Summer Music Series. That programming adapted to Your City Saturday and Your City Summer programs hosting local families and bringing history, crafts, songs, games, and introductions to the National Park Service.

## *Maybe you signed up for Lowell Kids Week or Play-Cation Activities?*

Public interest in these community offerings are synchronized with local school vacation weeks and saw attendance, community partnerships, and the engaging and interactive programming grow.

## *Perhaps you attended the Global Cloth Fair or dialogue programs?*

During fee free museum dates, special programs invited new audiences’ attendance. The Global Cloth Fair shared the common thread of textiles of the world. “Civil Rights to Social Justice” dialogue series premiered during Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

These engaging and original programs continue to develop. Check [www.nps.gov/lowe](http://www.nps.gov/lowe) for happenings in your national park in Lowell.



**Opposite page:** Clockwise from top: Park’s Facebook page “Likes” grow; Lowell Folk Festival Pilipino booth before the lines grow long; Veronica Robles performing at the Lowell Folklife Series, Textiles of Columbia at the Global Cloth Fair.

**Above:** Hands on during Kids Week.





# Advancing the Education Mission

**The Tsongas Industrial History Center**  
TIHC – the park’s education partnership program with University of Massachusetts Lowell’s (UML) Graduate School of Education – hosts nearly 50,000 students and educators annually. TIHC offers full school-day programs from mid-September through mid-June. Daily, up to 16 classes step off their buses at the curb on French Street and become immersed in Lowell’s industrial history and its more recent legacies. In the city, they discover a one-of-a-kind historic landscape in concert with hands-on interactive workshops at the Boott Cotton Mills.

While managing the ebb and flow of this volume of students, the TIHC also revised workshops and developed new programs that acknowledge resource opportunities and shifts in curriculum standards. Aligning with a focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) a revised workshop became “Engineer It!” STEM is also the driver in the TIHC role with UML’s “UTeach” program that introduces STEM majors to teaching career options. At TIHC, these UML students were exposed to teaching in a museum setting. Also with a science emphasis, George Wright Society Climate Change Intern Devan Hawkins created and piloted a new program with summer camps and local schools.

Thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), content created during several past summers of NEH-funded TIHC educator workshops was digitized, enhancing opportunities for sharing the imaginative and practical lesson plans developed by workshop attendees.

Some classes have a “Ticket to Ride” thanks to funding for field trip buses from the National Park Foundation and the NPS Northeast Region’s Transportation Grants. In 2013, 1,190 students from 9 schools benefited from these grants to attend “Change in the Making” and “River as a Classroom” programs.

And, for classes unable to arrange a trip to Lowell, the TIHC produced a new, primary-source based curriculum packet, titled “Lowell and the American Industrial Revolution.” The packet is published and sold through Eastern National.



**Top:** “Engineer It!” workshop challenges students to think creatively.

**Bottom:** Discovering macro-invertebrates during a “Bridging the Watershed” program.

# Professional and Organizational Excellence

Park staff, volunteers, and partners fulfill an amazing array of roles every day throughout the year. We’d like to share a few accomplishments and transitions occurring along the way:

**Honors and Awards**  
*Peter Aucella* received the Department of Interior’s Service award for his vision and leadership in the development and continued success of the Lowell Summer Music Series, which is reaching its 25th year in 2014.

*The Seashore Trolley Museum* volunteers at Lowell are the 2014 NPS Northeast Region George & Helen Hartzog Award recipients. This dedicated crew operates Trolley 966 – a welcome addition to the park’s trolley operations, and keeps the doors open at the Streetcar Museum in the Mack Building.

**Details, Details**  
Lowell’s Chief of Interpretation, *Kerry Olson* fulfilled a temporary assignment in the Northeast Regional Office as NER’s Youth and Volunteer Program Coordinator, sharing Lowell and discovering new ideas to return with. During those three months, the park was fortunate to have New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park’s Chief of Interpretation, *Frank Barrows* join the Lowell team.

**GOAL Academy**  
Youth and Volunteer Program Coordinator *Amy Glowacki* and Park Ranger *Dave Byers* participated in an intensive leadership development program in cohorts representing NPS employees nationwide.

**Public Matters**  
In partnership with The Lowell Plan, the sixth cohort of Public Matters: Empowering Lowell’s Leaders was underway in January 2014. Bringing about 20 participants together annually, the PM network continues to expand through all of Lowell’s public/private sectors as opportunities for partnerships grow.



Peter Aucella, Assistant Superintendent for Heritage Preservation, Development, and Special Events received the Department of Interior Service Award from Dennis Reidenbach, retiring NPS Northeast Regional Director.

**Transitions**  
Lowell National Historical Park’s employees put their heart and soul into their work, whatever the role. Sometimes, we must say farewell as people move on to new phases in their lives. Recently, the park bid farewell to the following staff in transition:

- *Alex Demas* retired
- *Sherry Frear* to the Department of Defense
- *Sarah Guevara* to the Veterans Administration
- *Rebecca Lofgren* to Governors Island National Monument
- *Bill Spence* to Boston National Historical Park
- *Rubby Wuabu* to Suffolk University Law School



David Blackburn and UML’s Diana Archibald with recognition from the American Association for State and Local History for the 2012 exhibit “Charles Dickens and Massachusetts: A Tale of Power and Transformation.”







**Above:** Angkor Dance Troupe rehearsal for the world premiere of Apsara Dancing Stones.

**Right:** Lauren O'Shea, Colette Auguste, Stephanie Montalvo — three Trades Skills students — return the "Rate of Tolls" board to Francis Gate/Guard Locks.

**Lowell National Historical Park**  
67 Kirk Street, Lowell, MA 01852  
[www.nps.gov/lowe](http://www.nps.gov/lowe)

# 2014 Community Awards

Lowell National Historical Park partners with the Lowell Heritage Partnership to recognize ways in which Lowell benefits from the contributions toward historic preservation and cultural heritage in this community. This year we celebrate:

## Excellence in Cultural Heritage

**Phousita Huy, Artistic Director of the Angkor Dance Troupe** an internationally recognized master performer and instructor of Cambodian classical dance. For years of the Angkor Dance Troupe's existence, Phousita has provided opportunities for hundreds of youth to learn traditional Cambodian dances and she is also a champion for the innovation of new Cambodian performing arts pieces.

## Student Excellence in Historic Preservation

**Greater Lowell Technical High School Students in the Trades Skills Program** who have engaged in preservation work with the park through a partnership that also includes Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI). Trades Skills students have participated in painting, utilities, and repair projects.



## Excellence in Historic Preservation

### Charter Environmental

The Residences at Perkins Park and Administration Building reflect the beauty and character of the old mills as well as the functionality of their use. They were once part of the thriving Lawrence Manufacturing textile mills, circa 1840-1875. The project transformed the structures and incorporated new construction for apartments and the University of Massachusetts Lowell's Development Office.

### Boott Mill Developers LLC

To the partnership of Winn Development and Rees-Larkin Development for Boott Mills West, the final of four phases of the redevelopment of the historic Boott Cotton Mills complex, involving the renovation of 180,000 square feet of largely vacant mill space into 79 mixed income apartments and 40,000 square feet of commercial space.

**Design:** Higgins & Ross

**Photography:** Higgins & Ross: front cover, back cover (large photo), interior photo of Pawtucket Falls at sunset and interior photo of Lowell Folk Festival food vendors. All other photos courtesy of Lowell National Historical Park.